

ESPRIT
ORCHESTRA

GRIPPED BY PASSION

SUNDAY,
FEBRUARY 26, 2012

ALEX PAUK
conductor

TENG LI
viola

KRISZTINA SZABÓ
mezzo-soprano

KOERNER HALL AT THE
ROYAL CONSERVATORY IN THE
TELUS CENTRE FOR
PERFORMANCE AND LEARNING

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WELCOME TO THE THIRD CONCERT IN OUR 29TH SEASON.

In programming this concert, I set out to find music influenced by passionate, profound, mystical and spiritual experiences. This resulted in my selection of music by Vivier, Rea, Scelsi and Schnittke, all of whom I knew had written music that would fit the concert theme I had in mind. All of their works have a transcendental nature. Strong personal relationships make this concert special as well. John Rea, Alexina Louie and I were good friends with Claude Vivier and had collaborated with him in various ways. It's also a pleasure to perform John Rea's work again as it was commissioned and premiered by Esprit.

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Vivier's *Wo bist du Licht!* is an impassioned, emotional and sensuous plea for enlightenment achieved by layering instruments, sung texts and recorded sound. Scelsi's *Ohoi* reflects his feeling that he was a medium or emissary merely translating and passing on things in a state of meditation.

Schnittke's *Viola Concerto* has extensive virtuoso passages in an almost non-stop viola part soaring above an orchestra that includes no violins. The work is pure passion in its conception and what it demands of the soloist. Rea's *Zefiro torna* engages traces of music by Monteverdi with other musics, and ancient winds of a more ominous nature.

All the pieces on this concert are a testament to the eternal nature of great music conceived through profound, passionate personal experiences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Pauk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Alex" on top and "Pauk" below it, both starting with a capital letter.

Alex Pauk, Founding Music Director and Conductor

ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

Alex Pauk, Music Director & Conductor
Krisztina Szabó, Mezzo-soprano
Teng Li, Viola

Flute

Douglas Stewart, *piccolo*
Christine Little, *piccolo*,
alto flute
Maria Pelletier, *piccolo*

Oboe

Lesley Young
Hazel Nevin Newton,
english horn
Jasper Hitchcock

Clarinet

Colleen Cook
Richard Thomson, *bass clarinet*
Greg James, *E flat clarinet*

Bassoon

Jerry Robinson
William Cannaway,
contrabassoon
Steven Mosher

Horn

Gary Pattison
Diane Doig
Michele Gagnon
Linda Bronicheski

Trumpet

Robert Venables
Anita McAlister
Michael Fedyshyn
Brendan Cassin

Trombone

David Pell
David Archer
Herb Poole
Ian Cowie

Tuba

Scott Irvine

Piano

Stephen Clarke
Benjamin Smith, *celeste*

Harpsichord

Paul Jenkins

Harp

Sanya Eng

Percussion

Ryan Scott
Trevor Tureski
Mark Duggan
Haruka Fujii
Daniel Morphy

Violin I

Stephen Sitarski,
concertmaster
Parmela Attariwala
Corey Gemmel
Anne Armstrong
Csaba Koczo
Joanna Zabrowarna

Violin II

Bethany Bergman
Hiroko Kagawa
Louise Pauls
Michael Sproule
Renee London
Janet Horne

Viola

Douglas Perry
Rhyll Peel
Katherine Rapoport
Nicholas Papadakis
Angela Rudden
Ivan Ivanovich
Karen Moffatt
Mary McGeer

Cello

Paul Widner
Marianne Pack
Olga Laktionova
Margaret Gay
Peter Cosbey
Garrett Knecht
Mary-Katherine Finch
Jill Vitols

Bass

Tom Hazlitt
Hans Preuss
Roberto Occhipinti
Robert Wolanski
Natalie Kemerer
Sherri Preuss
Eric Lee
Erin Rose Macleod

GRIPPED BY PASSION

Sunday February 26th, 2012

Alex Pauk, Music Director and Conductor

7:15 pm	Pre-concert talk with composers Alexina Louie and John Rea
8:00 pm	Concert

PROGRAMME

John Rea *Zefiro torna* (1994)

Alfred Schnittke *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* (1985)
Teng Li, viola

- I. Largo
- II. Allegro Molto
- III. Largo

INTERMISSION

Giacinto Scelsi *Ohoi (I principi creativi)* (1966)

Claude Vivier *Wo bist du, Licht! (Light, Where Are You?)* for
mezzo-soprano, ensemble and tape (1981)
Krisztina Szabó, mezzo-soprano

Tonight's performance by Krisztina Szabó is
made possible with generous support from
The Max Clarkson Family Foundation.

ALEX PAUK

Music Director and Conductor

Alex Pauk, composer, conductor and educator, revitalized orchestral life for composers across Canada in 1983 by founding Esprit Orchestra as Canada's only orchestra devoted to new music. Esprit, with a core of 70 top instrumentalists, Canada's best soloists, and an annual subscription series in Toronto, encourages composers to take bold new directions. Through building and sustaining Esprit's high calibre performances, commissioning programme, innovative programming (80% Canadian), recordings, performing arts videos and DVDs, outreach projects, tours, and interdisciplinary arts and media ventures, Pauk has been a leader in developing and promoting Canadian music at home and abroad.

As a conductor he attains excellent performances on stage and in recordings. His innovative programming and commitment to the community through Esprit have garnered SOCAN and Chalmers Awards as well as three Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards. He was named *Musician of the Year* (1999) by peers at the Toronto Musicians' Association, was a recipient of Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize (2007) and has helped many composers advance their careers through commissions, high profile performances, recordings and broadcasts. Pauk's commissioning, of Canadian composers of all ages and stylistic trends, is central to his work. He has been a leader in taking new music out of the concert hall and to people in their communities. Under Pauk's direction, Esprit was awarded the 2005 Vida Peene Award for excellent standards of performance and innovative programming.

Alex Pauk has a very wide range of experience as a composer with works for every kind of performing ensemble, the theatre as well as dance companies. Revealing this depth of experience, his most notable compositions include *Touch Piece*, a multimedia work for full orchestra, 16 channel surround sound with digital sound track, sounds of nature and altered orchestral sound projected from loudspeakers, multi-screen video environment and fabric sculptures with special theatrical lighting; *Farewell to Heaven*, a full length work for the Menaka Thakkar Indian Dance Company; three works involving important Canadian virtuosos: *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra*, *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra* and *Flute Quintet*.

His newest work, *Musiques immersées*, for chamber orchestra and audio playback, received its world premiere in Montréal with the SMCQ on November 10th, 2011.

TENG LI

Viola

It was 2004 when Teng Li made a splash in the Toronto music scene by landing the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Principal Viola position at the astonishing age of 21. Past engagements include Takemitsu's *A String Around Autumn* in 2009, Bartok's *Viola Concerto* in 2008, Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* in 2006, Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* in 2006, and Strauss' *Don Quixote* in 2005.

Teng has given recitals in Toronto, Philadelphia, Chicago, Washington DC, and New York. Along with her TSO solo appearances, Ms. Li has performed with the Santa Rosa Symphony, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, Shanghai Opera Orchestra and others.

An accomplished chamber musician, Teng has participated in the festivals of Marlboro, Santa Fe, Mostly Mozart, Music from Angel Fire, Rome, Moritzburg (Germany) and the Rising Stars Festival in Caramoor. During the 2004/2005 season, she performed with the Guarneri Quartet in New York, and has performed at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall and with the 92nd St. "Y" Chamber Music Society. Teng was featured in concert with the Guarneri Quartet in their last season at the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and she is also a member of the prestigious Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two.

A recipient of numerous awards, Teng has won top Prizes at the Johanson International and the Holland-America Music Society competitions, the Primrose International Viola Competition, the Irving M. Klein International String Competition and the ARD International Music Competition in Munich Germany. She was also a winner of the Astral Artistic Services 2003 National Auditions.

Teng began playing the violin at age 5 in her native China and switched to viola at age of 12. She entered the Central Conservatory in Beijing in 1992, and at age 16 was accepted to study at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Teng currently serves on the faculties at the University of Toronto and Conservatoire De Musique De Montreal.

KRISZTINA SZABÓ

Mezzo-soprano

Hungarian-Canadian Krisztina Szabó has become highly sought after in both North America and Europe as an artist of supreme musicianship and stagecraft. Ms. Szabó exemplifies today's modern singer: she is vocally versatile, possesses excellent stage prowess and paints vivid character portraits on both the opera and concert stages. She sings frequently at the Canadian Opera Company and has been seen in diverse roles, such as Idamante (*Idomeneo*), Musetta (*La bohème*), The Double-Offred in the Time Before (*The Handmaid's Tale*), Nancy (*Albert Herring*) and the Pilgrim (*Love From Afar*).

In 2006 she helped christen the company's new opera house in their critically acclaimed *Ring Cycle* as Wellgunde (*Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*), and Siegrune (*Die Walküre*) and returned to open their 06/7 season in the role of Dorabella (*Cosi fan tutte*). Canadian audiences have also seen Ms. Szabó with Calgary Opera, Edmonton Opera, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, L'Opéra de Montréal, as the title role in *Iphigénie en Tauride* with Opera Atelier.

Outside of Canada, Ms Szabó has performed with Chicago Opera Theater, Stadttheater Klagenfurt, Washington Concert Opera and others.

Krisztina Szabó is a frequent performer of recital, concert and chamber repertoire. She has recently appeared as a soloist with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, L'Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, the San Antonio Symphony among others. In recital, she has appeared with Ravinia Festival, Aldeburgh Connection, Music Toronto, Off Centre Music Salon and Music at Sharon.

Ms. Szabó has appeared on television featured in CBC's "Opening Night" in concert with the Canadian Opera Company. On film, she can be seen as Zerlina with Dmitri Hvorostovsky in *Don Giovanni Revealed: Leporello's Revenge*, and she can be heard as the voice of Leanne in the new opera movie *Burnt Toast*. She will be a featured artist in upcoming CD releases with Talisker Players and with Musica Leopolis.

Ms. Szabó finished her postgraduate studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, England, after completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Western Ontario. She has been the recipient of the Emerging Artist grant from Canada Council.

STEPHEN SITARSKI

Concertmaster

An Oakville native, Stephen Sitarski enjoys an incredibly varied career as a violinist and musician. Acclaimed nationally in performances of Baroque music through to contemporary and jazz, he is also a recognized conductor, adjudicator, teacher and music administrator. Currently Concertmaster of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, he has also led many other Canadian orchestras including the Vancouver Symphony and Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra, as well as orchestras in the United States and Europe.

He frequently appears as soloist with orchestra and, along with much of the standard repertoire, performs concertos written especially for him by Canadian composers. In April, 2009, as part of the Open Ears Festival, Stephen performed R. Murray Schafer's violin concerto 'The Darkly Splendid Earth: The Lonely Traveller'. In March, 2011, he was guest concertmaster and featured soloist for the National Ballet Orchestra's programs Eugene Onegin and Russian Seasons.

He is 1st Violin of the Canadian Chamber Ensemble, a founding member of Trio Laurier, and is a regular participant in diverse chamber groups and festival events both nationally and internationally with many of Canada's finest musicians. He is also a frequent performer with Toronto's acclaimed Art of Time ensemble as well as Soundstreams.

Routinely heard throughout Canada on disc and on live radio broadcasts, Sitarski has also performed countless television and film scores, including the violin solos in the Hollywood film 'Being Julia'. A dedicated educator, Stephen is a faculty member of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, Wilfrid Laurier University and Glenn Gould School.

"Sitarski finds the inner truth and beauty of the music and this is what he communicates."

In recognition of his outstanding artistic contribution to the Kitchener-Waterloo community, he is a recipient of the Kitchener-Waterloo Arts Award for Music.

COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES AND PROGRAMME NOTES

JOHN REA | BIOGRAPHY

John Rea is one of Canada's most prominent living composers. He was born in 1944 in Toronto and studied at Wayne State University (BM 1967), the University of Toronto (MM 1969), and Princeton University, where he obtained a PhD in 1978. His teachers included John Weinzwieg, Gustav Ciamaga, Milton Babbitt, and Peter Westergaard. Rea achieved recognition early, winning the BMI Award for Student Composers in 1968, and he has forged a career rich in awards—twice winning the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music—and commissions—from CBC Radio, the National Youth Orchestra, the Canadian Chamber Ensemble, the Arditti String Quartet, and other organizations. Rea's orchestral pieces have been performed by, among other groups, the Esprit Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Rea has written for piano, chamber ensemble, chorus, and orchestra, as well as for electroacoustic instruments; he has also written works for the stage, including music-theatre pieces, a ballet, and an opera. Though Rea's work is notable for its stylistic diversity, a persistent feature of his music is its dual concern with, on one hand, structure and organization and, on the other hand, fantasy and freedom. He has described his project as a bringing together of two different musical "poetics," one "related to the projection of an acoustic geometry and another associated with the projection of narratives or of a certain theatricality." Rea's pieces also often make reference to music from other periods of European music history—as in his 1995 re-orchestration of Berg's *Wozzeck* for 21 musicians or in his 2003 orchestration of Mahler's *Seven Early Songs*—and to non-western, often Indonesian, music.

Rea is also engaged in numerous activities besides composing. He teaches music composition in the Schulich School of Music at McGill University, where he is a previous dean and head of composition. He serves on the editorial board of the new music journal *Circuit*. He co-founded the Montreal-based music companies Les Événements du neuf and Traditions musicales du monde, and for over two decades he has worked with the Montreal new music organization Société de musique contemporaine du Québec.

ZEFIRO TORNA (ZEPHYR RETURNS) (1994)

John Rea | Composer

Sometimes the wind operates in magical, sometimes in terrifying ways, be it in storms at sea and on land ... or in the adaptive geometry of a musical composition performed for the first time in an elegant drawing-room or aristocratic Kammermusiksaal. But the most mysterious place for the wind to work its wonders is in the human heart, for storms are located here as well.

The title of my composition makes reference to the sonnet of the same name written by Francesco Petrarca (his first on the death of his beloved Laura) and set almost three hundred years later as a five-voice madrigal by Claudio Monteverdi:

Zefiro torna e 'l bel tempo rimena
E i fiori e l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia,
E garir Progne e piagner Filomena,
E Primavera candida e veriglia.

Ridono i prati e 'l ciel si rassarena,
Giove s'allegra di mirar sua figlia,
L'aria e l'acqua e la terra è d'amor piena,
Ogni animal d'amar si racconsiglia.

Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi
Sospiri che dal cor profundo tragge
Quella ch'al Ciel se ne portò le chiavi;

E cantar augelletti, e fiorir piagge,
E 'n belle donne honeste atti soavi
Sono un deserto e fere aspre e selvagie.

Zephyr returns and brings back beautiful days
and flowers and grass, his sweet companions,
and warbling swallows, lamenting nightingales,
And Spring, milk-white and scarlet.

The meadows smile, the sky is blue again,
Jupiter regards his daughter with delight,
earth, air and water are filled with love,
and every animal renews its courtship.

But for me, alas, the heaviest sighs
return, drawn from the depths of my heart
by the one who took its key with her to heaven;

And birdsong, and the flowers of the field,
and the sweet sincerity of lovely women
are as a desert and pitiless wild beasts.

Monteverdi's music becomes for me a kind of *cantus firmus* which, during the course of its journey through my composition, engages in a dialogue with other musics, with other ancient winds of a more ominous nature, finally to emerge just at that moment when the gentle and agreeable wind Zephyr returns ... again.

Zefiro torna was commissioned by Alex Pauk, Music and Artistic director of the Esprit Orchestra of Toronto, thanks to a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts. The work is dedicated to Mario Bertoncini, inventor, pianist and composer of Aeolian music.



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ALFRED SCHNITTKE | BIOGRAPHY

Alfred Schnittke was born in 1934 in Engels, in the south of the USSR on the Volga River. His father was from a Russian-Jewish family in Frankfurt and had settled in the Soviet Union in 1926; his mother was a Volga German born in Russia.

Schnittke's father was stationed in Vienna for a time, and it was there where Schnittke began, in 1946, his musical training. Schnittke later remarked of his time in Vienna that "I felt every moment there to be a link of the historical chain: all was multi-dimensional; the past represented a world of ever-present ghosts, and I was not a barbarian without any connections, but the conscious bearer of the task in my life."

Schnittke's family returned to Russia in 1948, moving to Moscow where Schnittke studied at the Moscow Conservatory, counterpoint and composition with Yevgeny Golubev and instrumentation with Nikolai Rakov. Another important influence at this time was the former Webern student, Phillip Herschkowitz. From 1962 until 1972 Schnittke himself taught at the Moscow Conservatory. But after his tenure there had ended he engaged on a long career as a film composer, ultimately scoring almost 70 films.

Shostakovich's music was an important influence on the young Schnittke, though a visit to the Soviet Union in the early sixties by Luigi Nono led him to take up serialism and other advanced techniques. This period did not last long, though, and by the end of the decade Schnittke had already developed his characteristic polystylistic approach, in which different styles and forms of music—past and present, high and low—are combined in gripping ways. Sometimes the effect is joyous, at other times comic, at yet other times savagely ironic and even disturbing. Early on, Schnittke had difficulties with the Soviet authorities and the Composers' Union; at one point he was even banned from travelling outside of the USSR. Nevertheless, by the 1980s a band of passionately devoted high-profile performers, including Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet, and Mstislav Rostropovich, was bringing his music before the public to great acclaim.

Schnittke composed a tremendous amount of material in all of the major musical forms, including 9 symphonies, numerous concerti and concerti grossi, 4 string quartets, ballet scores, and 3 operas. And though plagued by ill health in his later years—a series of strokes beginning in 1985 left him physically diminished—his musical energies remained unchecked. From 1990 until his death in 1998, Schnittke lived in Hamburg, where he held dual German-Russian citizenship.

CONCERTO FOR VIOLA AND ORCHESTRA (1985)

Alfred Schnittke | Composer

Schnittke's *Viola Concerto* was composed in the summer of 1985 for the Russian violist Yuri Bashmet. The work is based on a musical motif that spells Bashmet's name: in a mix of French and German notation, B – A – Es – C – H - Mi or, in Anglo-Saxon, B flat – A - E flat – C - B natural - E natural. In three movements and scored for an orchestra without violins, the *Viola Concerto* makes great demands on the soloist, who plays almost without interruption throughout the work's roughly 30-minute duration and whose music features several virtuoso sections.

The first movement is a slow introduction. It begins with an anxious declamation from the viola. This leads into music in which the Bashmet motif is heard harmonized by the strings and then into a return of the declamation that terminates in a brutal full orchestra chord, a chord which is built from the notes of the Bashmet theme. A softer music arrives in the wake of this chord, ending the movement.

The second movement, marked Allegro molto, is a kaleidoscopic jumble of different musics and it exemplifies Schnittke's famous "polystylist," his technique of juxtaposing music from varied sources, high and low. (He wrote: "The goal of my life is to unify serious music and light music, even if I break my neck in doing so.") Film music, dance music, music for brass band, Soviet military marches—all of this and more is combined with hectic arpeggios in the solo part to create a swirling mix of styles.

The *Viola Concerto*'s final movement, its longest, is, as Gerard McBurney has written, "a spacious and desolate lament" in which "[t]hrough a dreadfully blank musical landscape, the viola soloist wanders as though searching for some echo or answer from the orchestra." In the end, the Bashmet motif returns, with the A minor triad it contains held by the orchestra's strings, the viola crying in its lower register against the sustained harmony.

GIACINTO SCELSI | BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1905 near the Italian city of La Spezia, Giacinto Scelsi. Scelsi spent his early years in his family's castle in Irpinia, not far from Naples. As its beginnings may hint, Scelsi's life story is not lacking in colour. As Alex Ross, in a recent *New Yorker* feature on his work, relates it,

"[Scelsi] was schooled [at the family castle] in "fencing, chess, and Latin," or so he said. He flitted through European aristocratic circles and had his wedding party at Buckingham Palace. But music was his chief obsession. He quickly tilted toward the avant-garde, and when he was very young he attended Luigi Russolo's Futurist noise concerts; his first major work was called "Printing Presses." Later, he became interested in Schoenberg's twelve-tone method, although he did not adopt it. He fell in love with Eastern philosophy and made trips to India and Nepal. After the Second World War, he suffered a breakdown and stopped composing for a few years. He spent day after day playing a single note on the piano."

This breakdown, the ensuing time at the piano, and his embrace of Zen philosophy, Yoga practice, and meditation—all of these proved to be the catalysts for the music of Scelsi's maturity. His earlier music was marked by a preoccupation with counterpoint and classical forms, reflecting his studies under former pupils of Alban Berg and Alexander Scriabin. But the music that followed his crisis was concerned above all with sound. Scelsi came to feel that individual notes had a sort of three-dimensional spatial presence and that one could hear, as it were, all sides of the note. This focus is exemplified in his revolutionary piece *Quattro Pezzi su una nota sola* (*Four Pieces on a Single Note*) from 1959. In each movement, a single note is played by the instrumentalists. But subtle microtonal shifts up and down from the note, glissandi, and carefully notated changes in timbre and dynamics create the alluring impression of sound as an object, as something one could almost touch.

Scelsi's output was large and, in addition to his explorations in sound and microtonality, he wrote traditional tonal pieces as well as works based on his deep interest in the modal musics of the East. He even composed a set of divertimenti for solo violin that some have called the greatest music for unaccompanied violin since Bach. Scelsi was also a published poet and writer of works on music theory.

Scelsi spent his final years in Rome. Towards the end of his life the dedication of various admirers—especially the composer Franco Donatoni—finally succeeded in bringing much of his music before the public. In Rome, Scelsi attended these concerts and was a regular presence at new music events. On 8-8-88 (August 8, 1988), Scelsi ceased all communication with the outside world. He died the next day.

OHOI (*I principi creativi*) (1966)

Giancinto Scelsi | Composer

Though little known and performed during his lifetime, Scelsi's compositions, which explore microtonality and new instrumental sounds, are now acclaimed as some of the most important and innovative pieces in 20th-century music.

The haunting *Ohoi*, scored for 16 strings (4 first violins, 4 second violins, 4 violas, and 4 cellos), reflects these interests as well as Scelsi's conviction that he was a medium merely translating messages received in a state of meditation. The work begins with a very soft tremolo between a low E and D#, then very gradually moves higher and higher until a moment of climax is reached in the upper register with the strings slipping in and out of unison. Along the way Scelsi gives us a music of gentle rocking figures, flutters, and glissandi that is roiling and tense, yet somehow simultaneously luminous, even cosmic. In the end, having traversed a field of shimmering textures and close, microtonal harmonies, the strings reach their home in the heights and fade away into silence.

CLAUDE VIVIER | BIOGRAPHY

Considered by many to be Canada's greatest composer, Claude Vivier, born in 1948 in Montreal, lived a life passionately devoted to music, a life which took him from Canada to central Europe to the Far East and finally to Paris, where he was brutally murdered at the age of 34.

Born to unknown parents, Vivier was adopted when he was three and later sent to a Marist seminary. But an expulsion for "immature behaviour"—a charge which perhaps had something to do with his having been open about his homosexuality—set Vivier on a new course, and he began studies at the Conservatoire de Musique in Montreal under Gilles Tremblay (composition) and Irving Heller (piano). His next move was to Europe, where he studied electronic music at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht with Gottfried Michael Koenig and composition with Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne.

The next two major events in Vivier's life were crucial for the development of his mature style. First there was his long journey, begun in 1976, through the Far East. He visited Japan, Bali, and other countries, and the music he heard during his travels had a profound influence on his work. Then there was his encounter with the French spectralist school. The spectral composers rejected the focus on musical structure prevalent in post-World War II avant-garde music and concentrated instead on musical sound. Using techniques learned in the electronic music studio, the spectral composers based their compositions on the exploration of timbre and the natural overtone series. The impact on Vivier's music of his eastern journeys and his spectral investigations is summed up by Paul Griffiths in a *New York Times* profile of Vivier's work: "The harmonic auras are suddenly more complex, and the fantastic orchestration is unlike anything in Vivier's earlier music, or anyone else's. Perhaps he found it by listening intently to bells and gongs, for the huge chords that march along—around—the voice commonly have deep fundamentals with a fizz of interfering higher tones, rather like metallic resonances."

The remarkable series of large-scale works Vivier composed in the late 1970s and early 1980s came to an end in 1983. On March 12, Vivier was found dead in his Paris apartment. He had been stabbed to death by a 19-year old man, possibly a prostitute Vivier had met several days before.

WO BIST DU LICHT! (LIGHT, WHERE ARE YOU?) (1981)

Claude Vivier | Composer

Wo bist du Licht!, scored for mezzo-soprano, ensemble, and tape, was one of the last pieces composed by Vivier before his untimely death in 1983. The fruit of a commission from Société Radio-Canada, the work is a startling superimposition of sung text and orchestral music onto pre-recorded spoken words. What results is an impassioned plea for enlightenment, which the composer Michel Gonneville has described as “a long and continuous melody and a meditation on human sorrow.”

Vivier’s music often features vocal settings against an ensemble and electronic background, and *Wo bist du Licht!* develops this tendency in striking ways. Here Vivier has a mezzo-soprano sing the poem “Der blinde Sänger” (The Blind Singer) by the German Romantic poet Friedrich Hölderlin. The melody unfolds in a continuous, recitative-like style over a backdrop of vivid music for orchestra that moves back-and-forth from noise to consonance in a pattern based on the sinusoidal wave. But we also hear three types of spoken text. In Vivier’s own description, these are “an emotional [text] that is extremely significant for America: Martin Luther King’s last speech and a recording in situ of Robert Kennedy’s assassination”; an “abstract text, with no signification” composed in the invented language Vivier began developing in his last years; and “a descriptive text about torture.”

Vivier noted that Hölderlin’s poem “holds the key to understanding my composition. An old blind man remembers his past, beautiful picturesque scenery; greeneries, clouds, etc. The present is evoked by harsh sound images: thunder earthquakes. He longs for light, freedom, death perhaps....”

RECORDED EXCERPTS

Excerpt 1

Martin Luther King. Excerpt from «I have a dream» 20th Century Fox CD TFS 3201. The original address from the «March on Washington», August 28, 1963.

Assassination of Robert Kennedy. «30 Years of US History»
Radio-Canada Archives no 760814-3

Excerpt 2

Hölderlin, Friedrich

Der blinde Sänger | (Quatrains 4 à 9)

Mir grünten sonst die Lauben; es leuchteten
Die Blumen, wie die eigenen Augen, mir;
Nicht ferne war das Angesecht der
Meinen und leuchtete mir und droben

Und um die Walder sah ich die Fittiche
Des Himmels wandern, da ich ein Jungling war;
Nun sitz ich still allein, von einer
Stunde zur anderen und Gestalden

Aus lieb und Leid der helleren Tage Schafft
Zur eignen Freude nun mein Gedanke sich,
Und ferne lausch'ich hin, ob nicht ein
Freundlicher Retter vielleicht mir komme.

Dann hor'ich oft die Stimme des Donnerers
Am Mittag, wenn, der eherne nahe kommt,
Wenn ih m das Haus bebt und der Boden
Unter ihm dröhnt und der Berg es nachhallt.
Den Retter hör'ich dann in der Nacht, ich hör'
Ihn tödend, den Befreier, belebend ihn,
Den donnerer vom Untergang zum
Orient eilen und ihm nach tönt ihr,

Ihm nach, ihr meine Saiten! es lebt mit ihm
Mein Lied, und wie die Quelle dem Strome folgt,
Wohin er denkt, so muss ich foert und
Folge dem Sichernen auf der irrbahn.

Once the leaves greened for me; the flowers
Would shine like my own eyes;
Not far away, my own faces
Shone for me, and, when I

Was a child, I saw the wings of heaven
Traveling above and around the woods;
Now I sit silent alone, from one
Hour to the next, making shapes

Of love and pain from brighter days,
Taking comfort only in my thoughts,
And strain far to hear it perhaps
A kindly rescuer comes to me.

Then I often hear the voice of the Thunderer
At midday, when the honored one comes near,

When he shakes the house, and under him
The foundation quakes, and the mountain resounds.

Then I hear my rescuer in the night, I hear
Him kill, this liberator, to give new life;
From sunrise to sunset I hear the Thunderer
Hurry on, and you call in his direction,

My strings! My song lives with him,
And as the source follows the stream,
Wherever he has a thought, I must also go,
Following the sure one on his erratic path.

Excerpt 3

Voice of a Vietnamese woman.

Text invented by Claude Viver (sung by mezzo-soprano)

Wo bist du Jugend-li-ches! das immer mich Zur Stun-de weckt des Morgens, Wo
bist du Licht! wo bist du Nach denkli-ches Nach-den Kliches Dar Herz ist wach,
doch bannt und hält in Hei li gem zau-ber Dur Herz ist wach, doch bannt und hält in
Hei li gem Zauber die Nacht Mich immer

Wohl ist das Herz wach, dochmir zürnt, mich Hemmt die er-stau-nen de nackt nin
immer Wo bist du licht wo bist du ju-gend-li-ches! Wo bist du licht! Wo bist du licht
wo bist du licht wo bist du licht wo bist du licht

Wo hin wo-hin ich Hö-re dich du und dort da und dort da und dort da und dort du
Herli-cher wo-hin wo hin du Herr-Li-cher und ringo um die er-de tönts Und ingaum
die Erde tönts Wo en-dist du wo end-est du und was was ist es was ist es ü ber
den Wol-ken und o wie wind mir tag tag du ü-ber stur-zen-den wol-ken sei wol ken
will- kommen mir? es blü-het mein Au-ge dir es blü-het mein Au ge dir wo hin wo-
hin wo hin wo-hin wo hin wo-hin wo-hin da-i Ko Zè to-i so vo yo mè la go ou-
a ri né you za gualè di è yo zè ka hesh to vi nè yo nè to vi nè yo to vi nè yo zè ka yo
me rè tcha tcho-ou yè zi

Ko nè yo yè dja mo-i kè fè zi no-i ka rèsso dè ka la rè dja
[id ou] -se yè zé ma yo Fo-i yè da zi nin no yè ni(n) za djé ko go ko nè go ko wa da
mour

Hé zè you za kè zo mo yè kè hé zè you za ké zo mi yé do-i mi do Hé o Hé o Ka li
ma na zi zo da-i go rè sha zi o e-i ta Gè za nè Ko mi yè Gue za ka ré mi sha né
young gè rè Ko zè yo wo bist du wo bist du licht da-i-ko zè to rè la-i wo bist du licht
wo bist du wo bist du licht na yo zo mi ga li yo rè li yo na ya zo mi ka ka yè sou yè
na ka yè no-i wo bist du licht En-Fant wo bist du licht wo wo bist du wo bist du licht
wo bist du licht bist du licht wo bist du licht

Du Grü-ne-Boden Frie-dli-chu wieg Und de Haus Mei ner vä-ter Und ihr Lie-ben die
mir re-ge-gne ten einot o na-het o Kommt deb eu-er due Freude sei Freu-de sei ihr
al le dab euch se gne der se-hen-de wo bist du ju gend-li-ches Wo bist du Licht.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW WAVE COMPOSERS FESTIVAL 2012

Score Reading of Student Compositions by Esprit

Monday, March 19, 2012

10 am – 1 pm FREE

Music Faculty, University of Toronto

MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building

80 Queen's Park

DREAM IN A BAR @ Drake Hotel Lounge

Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 8pm FREE

Part One: DREAM IN A BAR

Wallace Halladay, saxophone

Ryan Scott, percussion

Christian Lauba *Dream in a Bar*

Philippe Leroux *Air*

Philippe Hurel *À Bâtons Rompus*

Dennis Desantis +8

Part Two: ACID BRASS

13 piece band lead by Scott Good

Acid Brass explores a relationship between two different music traditions - big band and techno. Set for live Jazz Band. Using music of DJ Fast Eddie, Kevin Saunderson, Todd Terry, Barker-Massie-Partington-Price (808 State). *The Groove That Won't Stop | Pacific 202 | Cubik*

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FEBRUARY 26, 2012

ALEX PAUK
conductor

TENG LI
viola

KRISZTINA SZABÓ
mezzo-soprano

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